Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on line 14 of page 13 as follows:

A secondary seal is established by the tapered portion 26 of the sleeve seal 20. The female connecting block 62 further includes a mounting surface 64, and includes the throughbore 66 extending through the female connecting block 62. The throughbore 66 includes a chamfer 68 in the mounting surface 64 where the chamfer 68 and throughbore 66 define a transition surface 70 therebetween. The transition surface 70 is essentially a ring formed from an annulus of intersecting points formed at the intersection of the chamfer [70] 68 and throughbore 66. The tapered surface 28 of the tapered portion 26 of the sleeve seal 20 locates against the transition surface 70 of the female connecting block 62 such that the transition surface 70 engages in annular line contact against the tapered surface 28 to create a secondary seal of the fluid-tight block connection 10. This, in effect, forces the components on center thereby avoiding side-load types of failures.

In accordance with the provisions of 37 CFR §1.121, replacement paragraphs incorporating the amendments are attached hereto as Exhibit B.

In the Claims

Kindly amend Claims 2-3, and 9-11 and 14 and add new Claim 15 as follows:

2. (Amended) A composite sleeve seal for sealing a conduit connection, said composite sleeve seal comprising:

a body portion including a plurality of collar sections spaced apart from one another to define at least one gap therebetween, said plurality of collar sections being interconnected by at least one link segment spanning said at least one gap; and

at least one seal portion interposed said plurality of collar sections in said at least one gap and surrounding said at least one link segment to interlock said at least one seal portion with said body portion to form said composite sleeve seal as one integral component.

3. (Amended) A composite sleeve seal as claimed in claim 2 wherein said plurality of [at least one] collar [section is] sections are made of plastic material and said at least one seal portion is made of rubber material.

9. (Amended) A [composite sleeve seal] fluid-tight conduit connection as claimed in claim 8, wherein said at least one link segment comprises three link segments interconnecting each of said plurality of collar sections together.

10. (Amended) A [composite sleeve seal] fluid-tight conduit connection as claimed in claim 9, wherein said three link segments extend axially between each of said plurality of collar sections.

11. (Amended) A [composite sleeve seal] fluid-tight conduit connection as claimed in claim 10, wherein said three link segments are circumferentially spaced 120 degrees apart.

14. (Amended) A method of manufacturing a composite sleeve seal comprising the steps of:

producing a body portion including at least one collar section having at least one link segment extending from said at least one collar section;

placing said body portion in a mold cavity; and

injecting a seal portion into said mold cavity around said body portion contiguous with said at least one collar section and around said at least one link